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ABSTRACT

The absence of a professional career structure for teachers is not a new problem. In 1989, Australian unions, employers, and governments negotiated the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) classification. Three levels of AST status involving salary increases were proposed to offer teachers a professional career path in teaching comparable in status to that enjoyed by administrators. In 1994 it appeared that the reform had made little progress. An ongoing study has investigated what happened to the AST reform in practice. A central focus of the research was the extent to which the implementation of the AST classification had met the requirements of the career development model. The first part of the study, focusing on the first level of AST that represented a salary increase of $1,200 (Australian), involved 34 teachers, 10 principals, 18 employer representatives, and 12 teacher union officers in all Australian states except Tasmania and the Northern Territory. The second part, involving 45 study participants, investigated the implementation of AST levels 2 and 3 in Victoria (Australia), the only state school system so far to go beyond AST level 1. Throughout the interviews it became apparent that teachers regarded second and third level reforms more favorably than first level. Analysis of the findings revealed a series of issues other school systems might consider before implementing a similar career structure reform: (1) career stages in teaching versus administration; (2) developmental versus competitive standards; (3) pay for the person versus pay for the position; (4) teaching versus non-teaching criteria; and (5) valid versus inadequate evaluation for AST. Preliminary results of the study indicate that the AST classification is unlikely to provide a more attractive career path for the best teachers, raise the quality and status of teachers' work, or promote professional development and improve quality of learning in schools. Selection criteria and mandatory skills are listed in the appendix. (Contains 37 references.) (ND)

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IMPLEMENTING NEW CAREER STRUCTURES FOR TEACHERS

A STUDY OF THE ADVANCED SKILLS TEACHER IN AUSTRALIA

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IMPLEMENTING NEW CAREER STRUCTURES FOR TEACHERS

A Study of the Advanced Skills Teacher in Australia

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Traditionally, school teaching has been a flat, careerless occupation. Teachers wanting to 'get on' have had to 'get out' of the classroom. Those wanting to 'move up' in status have had to 'move off' into administration. Teachers who stay in teaching are led to believe they have forgone the opportunity to have a career and in some sense 'failed'. Managing schools is afforded more status than teaching well, even though expertise in teaching is critical to the ability of schools to achieve their primary objective. The pay structure implies, instead, that teaching well is one of the least important things to be doing in a school or education system.

Career structures in traditional professions are different. Professionals continue to practice as their careers progress, with few fundamental changes in the nature of the work they do, and with no diminution of status as a result. University academics in Australia, for example, can progress from tutor, lecturer, senior lecturer, associate professor and professor during their career. They are expected to continue to contribute to research and teaching and administration. As with most traditional professions, career structures are based primarily on the principle of payment for the person's knowledge and skill rather payment for the job or position (Lawler, 1992).

Australian school teachers have no such career structure, *as teachers*. After reaching the top of the incremental pay scale, at about thirty years of age, most who wish to remain in teaching positions stay on the same salary level until they retire. (And it is very rare for increments to be awarded for higher degrees or for better performance.)

The reasons why teaching is relatively careerless are embedded no doubt in the history of teaching in Australia as an highly bureaucratised and feminised occupation. However, there are other, perhaps related, reasons that stem from the lack of a clearly articulated knowledge base for teaching (Shulman, 1987; Berliner, 1992). From this "expertise" perspective, the lack of a staged professional career path in teaching can be interpreted in at least two ways:

(i) after teaching for a few years, teachers are not expected to get any better (ie. they are not worth paying more, or experience is not worth paying for), or

(ii) after teaching for a few years, there is no clear conception as to what they should get better at (ie. the profession has not delineated advanced professional standards for its members).

There has been no system for defining and valuing expertise in teaching in Australia. The lack of a career structure, based on evidence of professional development and quality teaching, devalues teaching as a practice and as an occupation. It also has a detrimental impact on factors related to the quality of teaching, such as: teachers' commitment and motivation for professional growth (Reyes, 1990); perceptions that teachers' work is recognised and valued; the nature of the organisational culture (Louis & Smith, 1990); and the ability of the profession to attract and retain its share of talented graduates (Bok, 1992).

THE ADVANCED SKILLS TEACHER

The absence of a professional career structure for teachers is not a new problem. It has been recognised for many years in many countries (eg. Lortie, 1975). In 1989, however, Australian unions, employers and governments negotiated an agreement that promised to make a breakthrough - the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) classification. Three levels of AST status were proposed: AST 1 (worth an extra $1200 a year), AST 2 (equivalent in salary to a head of department or department chair) and AST 3 (equivalent in salary to a deputy principal). These three levels were intended to offer teachers a professional career path in teaching comparable in status to that enjoyed by administrators. This meant rewarding improvements in the quality of teachers' knowledge and skills and providing opportunities to take up leadership roles in relation to curriculum and staff development. Such an offer, it was hoped, would keep good teachers in the classroom, provide all teachers with an incentive to undertake skill-base professional development, and attract higher calibre recruits to the profession.

Criteria for AST were developed by employer-union negotiation in each school system. The five main criteria headings for AST 1-3 agreed on for the Victorian state school system were:

A. Demonstrated skills in excellent classroom teaching practice which foster improved learning outcomes for all students;

B. Ability to develop positive relationships with students which engender positive attitudes to learning, and effective communication skills when collaborating with parents and teachers;

C. Ability to successfully implement and evaluate curriculum initiatives in line with key educational policy and ideas;

D. Ability to contribute with other members of the school community to the identification of local classroom and professional development needs, and to the development and implementation of programs to meet those needs;

E. Ability to implement social justice strategies including equal opportunity and equal employment opportunity within schools.

An elaboration of these criteria is included in Appendix 1. No quotas applied for AST 1 initially. AST 2 & 3, however, were made into positions, with specified duties. School could choose from a range of types of positions, according to their needs, those to which they would allocate AST 2/3s. Extra criteria specific to these positions were supplied also. Curriculum coordination was one of the most common. The main criterion for this position was:

F. Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementationand evaluation of the school's curriculum program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Evaluation of applicants for AST was handled at the individual school level by panels of four (usually the principal, a teacher elected by the staff, the teacher union representative in the school, and a nominee of the state Department of Education (usually a school adminstrator from a nearby school)). Panels had to follow procedural guidelines laid down centrally. The only sources of evidence on which panels could base their judgements were (i) a self-report by the teacher-applicant indicating how they believed that met each criterion, (ii) reports from referees nominated by the applicant, and (iii) interviews usually about half an hour. Classroom or other forms of performance data could not be required by selection panels. (Full details of selection procedures can be provided on request to the authors)

By 1992, AST 1 had been introduced in virtually all government and non government education systems across the nation. It seemed that at last teachers would have the career structure that placed value on the quality of teaching. Within a year, however, worrying

signs began to appear. Apart from a few exceptions, the implementation of AST 1 ended in disappointment. Review after review found that instead of making a professional breakthrough, AST 1 represented an opportunity lost (Chadbourne and Ingvarson, 1991; Crowther and Gaffney, 1993; Currey, 1994). On top of that, the progress of AST 2 and 3 has been less than encouraging. By 1994 only one state school system has introduced AST 2 and 3 - Victoria. In the previous year, schools in that state were allocated a quota of AST 2 and 3 positions based on student enrolments and special needs. These positions were advertised statewide and half of them were filled by open competition; the other half have yet to be filled.

What happened to the AST reform in practice? This paper reports the findings of our ongoing investigation into that question. We have organised the material into six sections: background, theoretical framework, method and data sources, findings, and closing considerations.

BACKGROUND

During the 1980's, Australian governments made a concerted effort to tackle the problem of how to make the nation's economy more internationally competitive. A major plank in their overall strategy was Award Restructuring. Up till the mid 80's, salary increases were granted almost automatically on the basis of increases in the Consumer Price Index. Award restructuring tried to change this practice by making pay rises dependent on improved productivity.

In Australia, industrial awards are statutory, legally enforceable documents. They can specify pay rates, job classifications, hours of work, holiday and sick leave entitlements and, in some cases, safety standards, staffing levels and dispute settlement procedures. Within Australia's highly centralised industrial relations system, awards are made by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission and State tribunals. In the early 1990s about 85% of the workforce was covered by these awards (Curtain and Matthews, 1991, p.6).

Award Restructuring entailed reviewing existing pay classifications to establish the type of skill-related career paths that encourage workers to participate in continuing skill formation (Curtain 1991; Morris 1989). Award restructuring offered workers better wages and conditions in return for union cooperation in a fundamental review of industrial award, which gave effect to what has become known as the Structural Efficiency Principle (SEP). This principle emphasised the need for a "more highly skilled and flexible labour force to assist in structural adjustment and to provide workers with access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs" (Morris, 1989, p.3). The SEP gave workers incentives and scope to meet this need by accepting, for example, the following measures as evidence of increased productivity (Morris, 1989, p.4):

- eliminating impediments to multiskilling and broadening the range of tasks which a worker may be required to perform;
- addressing cases where award provisions discriminate against sections of the workforce;
- ensuring that working patterns and arrangement enhance flexibility and efficiency of the industry.

Historically, the AST initiative emanated from a unique and national coming together of all teacher unions throughout Australia to make a joint submission to the Industrial Relations Commission. Potentially, it constituted one of the most progressive educational reforms ever adopted in Australia. It entailed the explicit use of the industrial relations arena as a vehicle for, in effect, professionalising teaching (Bluer and Carmichael, 1991; Durbridge, 1991). Even further, claimed some observers, it signalled a definite shift, in terms of control over the policy agenda on the quality of teaching, to the unions (Angus, 1991).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In principle, the AST classification represented a shift from a career ladder model to a career development model for teacher compensation, as described by Bacharach, Conley & Shedd (1990) and Odden and Conley (1992). In Lawler's (1990) terms, it was to be a pay system based on payment for knowledge and skill, not payment for occupying a position in an administrative hierarchy.

Numerous attempts have been made to find more appropriate career structures and pay systems for teachers. Most commentators (such as Conley, 1994) put these schemes into three groups: merit pay, career ladders, and career development models.

Extensive reviews have questioned the validity of merit pay schemes and the soundness of the assumptions on which they are based (eg. Johnson, 1986, Murnane and Cohen, 1986; Rosenholtz, 1986; Scriven, 1994). Studies of career ladder (Schlechty, 1989), differentiated staffing (Johnson, 1990), or job ladder (Bacharach, 1986) approaches to career enhancement have highlighted the dysfunctional effects of competitive promotion and restrictions on teacher opportunities to gain experience in a variety of positions of responsibility as part of teaching. And, in a review of assumptions about incentives and teacher development that underpin various performance-related pay schemes, Jacobson (1992) concluded that the quality of teacher performance is more a function of recognition and increased responsibility than salary per se.

Others researchers (Lawler, 1990; Bacharach, Conley & Shedd, 1990; Odden and Conley, 1992) call attention to the effects that the pay system needs to have on professional development, collegiality and the willingness of teachers to contribute to effective school management. They argue for a "career development" model. The primary basis for career advancement in this model is teacher knowledge and skill. The model also depends on a broader definition of teachers' work and contractual duties than individual classroom teaching. Advocates of career development turn away from the job ladder concept and argue that distinctions should not be drawn between the specific duties assigned to teachers at different levels. In their view, all teachers would be expected to contribute managerially as well as educationally to their schools. What would distinguish teachers at different levels, then, is the quality of their professional expertise.

Our study of the Advanced Skills Teacher reform in Australia is embedded in questions and issues that arise when a school system attempts to move towards the career development model. It also relates to the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) in the USA. The NBPTS is offering advanced certification for teachers who meet high professional standards, which it is hoped employers will recognise in career terms. It is still far from certain that school districts in the USA will lend widespread support to the NBPTS initiative. In contrast, Australia instituted the a new career path first, but then did not do anything like the same level of research on developing standards or new forms of teacher assessment as the NBPTS. The consequences have thrown the AST reform into jeopardy.

A central focus for our research was the extent to which the implementation of the AST classification had met the requirements of the career development model. What are the main features of the career development model? Drawing on the work of a variety of authors, including those referred to above, we have identified the main components as stages, standards and evaluation (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1994: p. 13):

Stages

- a career path in teaching comprising a graded series of stages or milestones, each representing a significant advance in professional knowledge and skill
- tangible rewards in terms of salary and status for reaching each stage

Standards

- payment for the person's professional expertise, not the position occupied or tasks undertaken
- promotion to each stage based on a demonstration of high standards of knowledge and skill in teaching
- a career development, not career ladder, approach

Evaluation

- summative evaluation of applicants' professional knowledge and skill by a 'college of specialists' using multiple sources of data
- criteria-based selection with no quotas imposed on the numbers admitted to each stage in the career path.

METHOD AND SOURCES OF DATA

We conducted the study in two phases. The first took place throughout June and July of 1991 and focussed on the implementation of AST 1. It involved interviewing 34 classroom teachers, 10 school principals, 18 employer representatives and 12 teachers union officers in all Australian states except Tasmania and the Northern Territory. The second phase investigated the implementation of AST 2 and 3 in Victoria, the only state school system so far to have gone beyond AST 1. For this phase we conducted interviews in four state secondary schools and five primary schools in Melbourne during June 1994. The forty-five people we interviewed included the principals in each school and the teachers who had applied successfully for AST positions (about 5-6 teachers in each secondary school, and 2-3 in each primary school). The interviews with teachers usually took about one hour. Interviews with principals were longer. We sent a first draft of our findings back to the schools for comment and visited schools later to discuss the draft report with them.

During both phases of our study we used a range of published documentation about the background to the introduction of the AST, the industrial agreement, the negotiations that took place in defining criteria for AST selection and the procedures to be used by school-based panels in evaluating teachers for promotion. Documentation was also available from other sources such as surveys of schools that unions and employers were required to undertake when reviewing the implementation of the new procedures.

The results of phase one were published in *Valuing teachers' work: New directions in teacher appraisal* (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1994). They receive briefer coverage in this paper than the findings of phase two, much of which have been presented in a seminar paper (Chadbourne and Ingvarson, 1995) for the Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria. The implementation of AST 2 and 3 has been singled out here for extensive treatment because it throws up a wide range of recent issues yet to be resolved.

FINDINGS

It should be emphasised that the findings of phase one of our study apply to the implementation of AST 1 across most states in Australia. By contrast, the findings of phase two are based only on data collected in nine Victorian government schools.

Throughout the interviews for phase two, it became apparent that on a number of fronts teachers regarded AST 2 and 3 more positively than AST 1. For each gain, however, there seemed to be a downside; each advance seemed to contain a barb. The end result of our findings, then, is a series of issues which other school systems might consider if they intend to implement a similar career structure reform. These issues can be framed as follows:

- career stages in teaching (broadly defined) versus administration
- developmental versus competitive standards

- pay for the person versus pay for the position
- teaching versus non teaching criteria
- valid versus inadequate evaluation for AST.

In reporting the findings of phase two, the comments of people interviewed are coded as follows: secondary school advanced skills teacher (ST), secondary vice principal (VP), secondary principal (SP), and the numbers distinguish one person from another.

Career Stages In Teaching Versus Administration

The Advanced Skills Teacher concept provides three tangible career milestones for teachers to aim for. AST 1s are expected to remain in full time teaching. By regulation, four fifths of an AST 2/3's allotment must be devoted to face-to-face teaching. The AST 2s and 3s we spoke with said that for the other one fifth they tried to give priority to supporting the professional development and performance of other teachers through avenues such as mentoring, peer coaching and curriculum leadership. They also reported being under special pressure from non AST colleagues to be seen as deserving advanced skills status, to be seen as better teachers.

These points provide some grounds for claiming that in practice AST 2 and 3 represent stages in a career path in teaching, not school administration. Unfortunately, this positive claim is negated by an additional, overriding and sceptical view among school staff that AST 2 and 3 is something of a 'big con'. Their cynicism is grounded in what they see to be a distortion of the original concept of the AST, the difficult conditions under which the incumbents have to operate and the managerial role they are increasingly being asked to perform. In their view, when it comes to the crunch, their organisational 'masters' set aside the intentions of the AST and act as if they believe rewarding teachers for advances in the quality of their teaching alone is equivalent to giving them something for nothing.

To be sure, AST 2 and 3 were introduced at a time in Victoria when conditions did not augur well for success. A change in government in 1992 stalled the number of AST positions actually filled. In 1993, the number of teaching positions in the public school system was reduced by 8200; that is, nearly 20% of all teachers. As a result, teacher workloads intensified, class sizes increased and preparation time was reduced.

Within this context, the teachers we spoke with saw AST 2 and 3 as an insidious attempt by their employer to get extra administrative work done 'on the cheap' and to introduce substantial changes in schools without providing the necessary resources. More specifically, they saw AST 2 and 3 as:

- being only the old Senior Responsibility Positions (SRPs) by another name rather than an alternative career path in teaching
- involving more work but less resources than the previous system of SRPs
- having to give administrative tasks priority over teaching
- being coopted to perform the full range of management roles
- reinforcing a 'them' and 'us' division within schools.

AST 2 and 3: Merely Redefined Old Senior Responsibility Positions

As originally conceived, the implementation of AST required the gradual creation of additional promotional positions as more teachers reached the high teaching standards it supposedly defined. But economic conditions in the early 1990s dictated that the exercise be cost neutral. So the total number of promotional positions in schools remained at much the same level. This meant that instead of new untagged AST positions being created, former

Special Responsibility Position (SRP) jobs, such as department chair, professional development coordinator, curriculum coordinator, or year level coordinator were simply reclassified as AST 2 and 3 positions. That is, instead of leaving the old SRP positions intact to carry out specified managerial jobs and establishing new ASTs alongside them for staff wanting to make a career in teaching, one simply took the place of the other and thus for school staff it was 'business as usual'. Not surprisingly, staff we spoke with said that the only difference between ASTs and SRPs was a change in name. For example, they commented:

> AST 3s have picked up the old deputy principal and SRP roles. It's a big con trick. (ST16)

> The AST 2 and 3 structure just formalised the pay side. There is a job description but the outcome is no different from before. We've always had conscientious coordinators who did far and above job requirements. (VP12)

> AST is just a change of name. I coordinate curriculum development, assist teachers, trouble shoot and act as a conduit between the principal and the teachers in my subject department. I don't feel any different (to being an SRP). Being an AST 2 coordinator has not affected my status, power or influence. I have the same number of staff and students. (ST13)

More Work, Less Resources, Neglected Teaching

Although the implementation of AST 2 and 3 in Victoria has not increased the number of promotional positions in schools, it has been accompanied by an intensification in the amount of managerial chores to be done in schools, partly resulting from a shift to local school management. As mentioned earlier, AST 2 and 3 were introduced during a difficult period of organisational restructuring and 'downsizing' within the Victorian state education system which devolved a lot of administrative work from Central Office to schools. Consequently, ASTs have to do more work with less resources than the SRPs they replaced.

Our interviews with AST 2 and 3s left us with a clear impression of people who are over stretched with excessive workloads. We felt that most would be unable to sustain current work rates without suffering burnout before long. To cope with this intensification of work, AST 2s and 3s said they have to neglect their teaching, families and social life. Two phrases were commonly employed to express their feelings: being used "on the cheap" and "living off past preparation." In short, many AST 2s and 3s feel they have been 'got at' and that the promise of an enriched career in teaching was illusory. The following comments are representative. They suggest that the new career structure is having negative effects on the quality of teaching, and, significantly, professional development, something the new career structure specifically aimed to promote.

> I don't have any time to get better at teaching now; there's no time for PD and I don't go to inservices any more. We spend all of our spare periods at school doing AST admin. The work has to be done at school because it involves chasing up kids, ringing parents, pastoral care, discipline, truancy, kids missing a class, a lot of welfare issues. All this has to be done. It's necessary work for a school. (ST16)

> ASTs increase the people available to do admin jobs; its a kind of con job. (SP19)

> I put in 15 hours a week admin but only get four periods a week time allowance. The Ministry is getting it on the cheap. (ST3)

> I help other people teach better, which is more interesting, but at a sacrifice to my own teaching. Unless I'm feeding myself how can I help others? I would like to improve on it but there is no time. (ST13)

> In order to 'get on' I have to short change the kids by living off past preparation. (VP12)

> My role includes teaching 20 periods a week. I arrive at school at 8 a.m., get materials ready for teaching, talk with several other coordinators and have to plan time to grab

people. I leave school at five p.m. and work a couple of hours in the evening four times a week. I spend all day Sunday marking. (ST6)

For these teachers, AST is a con trick to get cheap labour rather than a career path. Moreover, some ASTs said that administrivia has crowded out time for the provision of collegial reviews of practice and professional development that supposedly were central to the AST role. In the words of one teacher:

> Morale is low because we sense we aren't connected with each other. My fear is isolation, of good ideas not being shared. We need a structure to identify, coordinate, organise and facilitate expertise in different schools to provide PD for teachers. (ST7)

Priority To Administrative Tasks

Despite the rhetoric about teaching being valued as much as school administration, AST 2s and 3s reported that in practice they feel the administration of the school expects them to give priority to their managerial work. This runs counter to their own priorities (referred to earlier). It also hinders attempts to demonstrate exemplary teaching and offer professional leadership. For example:

> Being an AST has impaired my teaching because of the workload. I teach 22 periods a week and all my non classroom time is taken up with meetings and coordination. It's crazy: we have a career structure that forces teachers to put kids last but there's not a lot you can do about it. It's less painful for the kids to suffer than for me to suffer; it's less painful to turn up to a lesson unprepared than to a staff meeting unprepared. I feel there is room for me to get better at teaching but when do I get the time to do it? It's a matter of priorities. (ST13)

> At times lesson preparation suffers. Student records and Austudy requirements take up 80% of my time because if the principal or parents want an interview then records have to be up to date. That takes precedence over lesson preparation. So I live off past preparation. (ST16)

> I have to neglect my teaching to a degree because the demands of responsibility are getting greater and greater. (ST6)

ASTs Co-opted For Management

An important aim behind the AST concept was to increase the time and opportunities for expert teachers to exercise educational leadership and influence beyond their own classroom. For 0.2 of their time they would be available to foster curriculum development, professional development and greater collegiality. However, they seem to have become agents principally for the implementation of the Department of School Education's (DSE) reform agenda for local school management rather than agents for strengthening professional culture.

The following comments indicate a rapid delegation of jobs to ASTs that previously were the province of principals and vice-principals. While this relieves senior management of some duties, it transfers the pressure to people with 0.8 teaching loads. In cases like this, the AST's role is being hijacked by senior management, leaving ASTs unable to carry out the role originally intended for them. As these senior managers saw it:

> I've been delighted with the AST 3s' capacity to take away from the vice principal/principal level a lot of student management stuff that ended up in my office; disciplinary things or parental things. Because of the global budgeting and self management, we have far more things to do. (SP9)

> ASTs are the first people you go to for advice, the one's you expect to lead the staff, the front of house people you call on when asked to deal with the community. (VP12)

In common with most, the following ASTs believed that their role was being re-defined by senior management to carry out administrative duties and that they were having middle management roles dumped on them:

Last year's principal was smart enough to use the ASTs as a think tank. Then we got hijacked into doing Charter things (A Schools of the Future Charter is an agreement or contract between a locally managed school and the state education authority) and I doubt whether the ASTs ever got the ball back. (ST23)

I've become more involved in whole school things and how budgets are organised. I get frustrated at all the meetings. (ST7)

There is a problem with the whole idea of ASTs keeping teachers in the classroom. A lot of teachers see the role as admin: timetabling, lockers, yard duty, record keeping, border transfers etc. (ST13)

As part of my job (AST 3) I have to organise: student records, parent nights, orientation programs, community relations committee, things the principal asks me to do (for example, problems with parents, teachers, kids), cluster meetings, common assessment tasks (CATs), general assessment tasks (GATs), general problems across the year level (staff and student problems), and be in charge of a cluster of 80-100 students. For that I get four periods time release a week. I've just been out to supervise cleaning the toilets because students did the wrong thing. (ST16)

These comments indicate many ASTs are being expected to carry out duties that do not require expertise in teaching - jobs they believed could be done by support or general staff. The conditions (support staff, professional culture) that would enable ASTs to fulfil their role as educational leaders do not appear to be in place as yet. In practice the 'extra pay only for extra work' principle appears to displace teacher's time and energy from their core teaching responsibilities and to exploit the conscientious. Ways to capitalise on the educational expertise of ASTs still need to be found.

Professional Identity: 'Them Versus Us'

Traditionally, the formal staffing structure of schools contains a division between administrative and teaching staff, separated by different roles and different levels of power, status and rewards. In some schools these differences lead to a conflict of interests, to a 'them versus us' feeling among staff and to a consequent struggle for control. Recent educational reforms in Victoria have provided a basis for intensifying these divisions. For example, in our view, DSE school principals seem to have become line managers for Central Office in relation to unpopular measures such as identifying teachers who are 'in excess' to the system's needs.

Where do AST 2s and 3s fit within the structure and culture of the 'new order'? According to the ASTs, they are identified by other staff as belonging more to the management than to the teaching staff of the school. Some ASTs classify themselves in a similar way. For example:

I am assumed and labelled by the principal as being on the management team. (ST13)

I see myself as part of the middle management of the school. (ST4)

For me AST means below admin, more middle management, but part of the admin line, and being more in admin than in the teaching area. Students don't see me as part of the formal hierarchy, but the staff do. (ST8)

The following teacher perceived that identifying AST as a layer of management would threaten collegiality, commitment to school improvement and the promotion of a professional culture in schools:

There is an assumption that AST holders will be the decision makers in the school. I'm on committees by virtue of the (AST) job I've got, not because I've been elected. That makes it harder to work with staff because ASTs are being used as a decision making group to the exclusion of the rest of the staff. ASTs have to be leaders but not at the expense of participation of staff. If staff are excluded, if there's no way for their voice to be heard in a legitimate way then there is dissatisfaction because of the tradition in Victoria and because teachers are professional people. The admin. see a sign of AST 3s as the ability to assume

the mantle of leader. This makes it very hard for the PD coordinators who are expected to inculcate a new culture. The staff have voiced a real perception that they don't have a voice on things because the ASTs have joined the leadership team. (ST7)

Comment

There is need for more research on the effects of the AST on the organisational culture of schools. Our preliminary data suggest some cause for concern. Turning ASTs into a job or position in a career ladder may have counter-productive effects on wider staff ownership, commitment and participation. There is little evidence to suggest the development of a more collegial or professional culture. ASTs appear to be exploited and non ASTs alienated by the managerialising of the new career step. The educational expertise for which ASTs were promoted seems to be under-utilised because of pressures to complete immediate and short-term tasks that could be carried out by suitably qualified general staff.

Developmental Versus Competitive Standards

Designers of career paths in teaching need to make decisions about whether entry to each stage within the structure will be: (a) unrestricted or limited by quotas, and (b) criterion or norm referenced. With respect to these decisions, the career development model requires the use of what Bacharach, Conley and Shedd (1990) call developmental, rather than competitive, standards. Developmental standards define criterion-referenced targets for professional growth. They do not impose quotas on how many teachers can reach the targets. Competitive standards function as norm referenced yardsticks for allocating a limited number of promotional positions and monetary rewards.

The original AST concept aimed to denote progressively higher standards of professional practice that most teachers would aim for and reach. It was intended to represent a broad staircase, not a pyramidal hierarchy. It proposed to provide all teachers with opportunities and incentives for professional development.

AST 1: Developmental Standards

AST 1 complied with the requirement for developmental standards. Generally, all teachers who had been on top of the incremental scale for at least two years were eligible to apply for AST 1 status. Also, the unions had won an agreement not to impose any quotas. In the event, over 90% of applicants in most systems - government and non government - were successful. In principle and practice, then, gaining AST 1 status became available to all teachers, not the exceptional few. As such, it fitted the egalitarian norms of school staffrooms and the cultural characteristics of effective schools - "collegiality, continuous improvement, professional experimentation and teacher involvement" (Odden and Conley, 1992, p.47).

However, a problem arose with the '90% success rate'. As will be documented later, insufficient attention was given to developing high professional standards and valid evaluation procedures for appointing teachers to AST 1. Cynicism quickly set in. AST 1 became known across the country as simply as automatic salary increase rather than payment for advanced knowledge and skill. Some teacher union officials fed this cynicism by expounding the view that since teachers had suffered a decline in real incomes for decades, they deserved a pay rise and if AST 1 provided the wherewithal, then so be it. Even some employers told us that, "No one wants to take AST's away because they increase morale" and "We were happy to give ASTs because we wanted happier teachers and better teachers." (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1994, p.274)

When faced with the criticism that AST 1 had degenerated into an automatic, defacto pay rise for long serving teachers, some employer and union representatives defended the 90% success rate on these grounds:

- only 75% of teacher eligible actually applied; therefore the real success rate was 67%

- the 25% non application rate was the outcome of a professional self-selection process which weeded out teachers lacking advanced knowledge and skill

- if teachers had been on the top of the salary scale for a long time, they must have developed advanced expertise.

Not all employers or teachers accepted these points. Quite the contrary. Some employers said they had worked hard (albeit unsuccessfully) to prepare the culture of their system to accept that only 20% of eligible teachers would get AST 1 status. Most teachers we talked to rejected professional self-selection as the major reason why 25% of eligible teachers did not apply for AST 1 status. They referred to a range of other reasons: the reward (after tax) was not worth the hassle; the ideological criteria were objectionable (evidence of commitment to state government policies); school-based panels did not inspire confidence; family and community commitments had higher priority. In relation to the third dot point, our impression is that very few people seriously believe being on top of the salary scale for a long time constitutes a valid indicator of a teacher's professional expertise.

AST 2 and 3: Competitive Standards

The appointment of AST 2s and 3s did not generate the type of cynicism produced by the 'automatic' promotion of applicants to AST 1. Several factors seemed to operate here: imposing quotas on AST 2 and 3 positions lowered the success rate; AST 2 and 3 positions were filled by open statewide competition. Thus, the process was more selective and therefore seen as more rigorous; because positions were more difficult to gain, success was perceived as more deserving.

On the other hand, in the process of appointing AST 2s and 3s, the concept of developmental standards was replaced with competitive standards. As mentioned earlier, quotas and competitive promotion can nurture friction, dissension and rivalry among teachers rather than the type of collegiality and experimentation required for school improvement (Odden and Conley 1992). Interestingly, though, most teachers we spoke to said that while the use of competitive standards may not have made matters any better, it did not make them any worse. Why? Firstly, because prior to the appointment of AST 2s and 3s, collegiality had not been widespread anyway. As several school staff commented:

> We're not used to collaborating with each other. There is a lot of informal collegiality but not much professional collegiality. Collaboration is not modelled as part of the culture. Teachers spend too much time shut in their rooms talking to students and not enough time on team teaching, sharing of learning and observing each other. (ST23)

> If you scratch the surface of collegiality and support it only goes a certain distance. It isn't collegiate in the sense that, "I will come into your classroom and feel comfortable with you." It is very guarded. Ask how many work together and share their resources? (SP9)

Secondly, many successful applicants had previously occupied Special Responsibility Positions. Rather than fostering resentment, winning an AST simply confirmed their prior status, in their own eyes and in the eyes of their colleagues.

All this is not to deny that the AST 2 and 3 experience created some ill feeling. Resentment did occur, not so much because of competition but because of appointments being made on a statewide rather than 'in house' basis. Typically, interviewees commented that:

> Some internal unsuccessful applicants were annoyed that outsiders got the jobs. (AST/VP20)

> The person I replaced was upset. I came in as an outsider. Two thirds of the ASTs were from the outside. We were aware we were coming in from the outside and we had to work out the vibes and politics of the school. (ST2)

> People who missed out on a position in this school were enormously scarred. It really

> threw people who saw themselves having a particular status within the organisation. When other people from outside were selected it rocked their security in terms of who they were and what they stood for and it took a long healing process. (SP9)
>
> Principals had to declare who was 'in excess'. Outside ASTs coming in to a school meant more teachers had to be declared 'in excess'. (ST7)

Further Considerations

An interesting finding was that most teachers now appear to accept the once unacceptable idea of differentiating between staff for salary purposes on the basis of the quality of their teaching. Teachers seem to be less opposed than in the past to promotion within a career structure based on expertise, provided that resources are available for the development of professional knowledge and skill, and that valid evaluation processes are used.

Accepting career structures based on knowledge and skill, however, does not necessarily mean endorsing competitive standards. The problems with AST 1 were more a function of inadequate standards development and evaluation methods, not the absence of quotas per se. AST 2 and 3 would be strengthened as a vehicle for career development by adopting criterion referenced, instead of norm referenced, selection. Costs would increase, of course, but they would be matched by publicly acceptable increases in quality or 'productivity', which was the main idea behind AST in the first place. Award restructuring was never a cost-neutral concept.

Pay for the Person versus Pay for the Position

Attempts to establish a career path in teaching (broadly defined), as distinct from school administration, have little chance of success if the pay system continues to reward teachers for doing extra managerial tasks rather than for demonstrating professional expertise. At the same time, it should be noted that the career development model incorporates the view that the range of teachers' responsibilities expands with experience. According to this model, career stages and the pay system should aim to reflect the increased worth of a teacher to a school, both as a teacher, and as someone with the expertise to perform wider leadership responsibilities in curriculum and management. The traditional cleavage between teaching and administration loses its relevance as schools move toward a more professional model of organisation and more flexible deployment of teachers.

What happened to this idea in practice? Despite its deficiencies, AST 1 did represent payment for the person, not the position. AST 1 status was attached to the person, in several senses. It could be taken by teachers from school to school, and it was granted on the basis of applicants' knowledge and skill in teaching. Unfortunately, AST 1 responsibilities were not defined in terms of a broad conception of teachers' work.

In contrast, AST 2 and 3 has reverted to the job ladder pay system typical of traditional bureaucratic organisations; that is payment for occupying a designated position, not pay for the person's knowledge and skill (Lawler, 1992). AST 2 and 3 became jobs, not advanced professional positions with flexible responsibilities. Rather than demonstrate advanced skill in teaching, broadly defined, applicants for AST 2 and 3 had to provide evidence of a willingness and capacity to carry out a specific task. Schools were allowed to nominate the type of positions tagged for AST 2 and 3. Generally, the positions involved administrative or managerial work, mainly coordination in areas such as year (grade) level organisation, curriculum, equal opportunity, and student welfare.

Advantages of Pay for the Position

Some staff, particularly principals, see gains in paying for the position rather than the person. In their view, it gives schools more flexibility to identify and resource priority areas and thereby act more strategically and responsively to changing needs. For some principals, even this is not flexible enough. They want to abandon permanent AST positions and replace them with 'task force' type contracts, appointed by them and under their control. For

example:

> AST 2 and 3 had the potential but it was flawed by being substantive positions. We said, this is the job we want the AST to do, and then we selected applicants on criteria for a job that may not be warranted in five years time. I would prefer a job-specific, time-specific system where you say, this job needs to be done for three years. (SP22)

Moreover, by making extra rewards contingent upon extra duties, AST 2 and 3 has become viewed by some school staff as a necessary mechanism for ensuring that essential administrative and managerial work gets done fairly and properly. From their perspective, abolishing the system of 'pay for the position' would lead to either no one doing this type of work or the wrong people agreeing to do it. They maintain that:

> The reality is the job has to get done and there's not enough money, so we have to entice quality teachers to apply for AST. If a brilliant teacher (AST) was not doing management jobs then that person would be seen as getting $2,300 more than the AST teacher who was doing management jobs. (VP12)

> There are jobs we perceive as important, and we use the ASTs to fill those jobs. Not all of them were educational outcome jobs - for example, timetabling and year coordination. (SP22)

> If ASTs didn't do the extra tasks, who would? (SP14)

> Would jobs get done if we didn't have AST type positions? Yes, but we may not get the right people to do them. (ST8)

> If areas need addressing in the school, you need a staff structure, otherwise the needs won't be addressed. ASTs created a good middle level management for ensuring that the work gets done. (ST6)

Disadvantages of Pay for the Position

By paying for the job, rather than paying for greater expertise, the AST 2 and 3 initiative has forfeited an opportunity to increase incentives for teachers to undertake professional development focused on teaching skills, broadly defined. It has reinforced a career ladder rather than a career development structure and thereby negated one of the original purposes of the AST classification - to recognise the value of teaching. Some of the teachers we spoke to commented that:

> There are lots of teachers better than me but they are not ASTs because they are not doing extra jobs. You don't get paid extra just for being an excellent teacher with five classes (a full time classroom teaching load). (ST16)

> If you choose to be a brilliant teacher and stay in the classroom, then you forego a career. In parliament, brilliant backbenchers can't get the same money as Ministers. (VP12)

> Many AST 2 jobs are not teaching referenced; they don't involve teaching. You could get a poor teacher doing those jobs well. The position (AST) is a misnomer. (ST13)

Paying for the position rather than the person has created several other problems. According to school staff, it fosters a disengagement mentality among non-AST staff of withdrawing their goodwill and saying, "The ASTs get the money, therefore they can do the work." Several school leaders said that this type of attitude is hardening with the ageing of teachers, particularly among those who realise that their prospects for career advancement are fading. For instance:

> Lots of teachers now say, "I will just teach." They are not prepared to do any more because they are tired and have had enough. They say, "ASTs are getting paid, they can do it." (VP12)

> It's a fairly entrenched attitude among secondary staff now that, "If I'm going to do that job

for you, I want some money and I want some time". (SP9)

A further problem of paying for extra work rather than the quality of teaching is that there is a finite amount of extra managerial work to do, whereas improvements in the quality of teaching are limitless. As a result, explained one teacher, "Other teachers can't get ahead because all the AST positions are taken up; there's not much opportunity for younger teachers". (ST16)

Comment

One of the aims of Award Restructuring was to increase the flexibility with which staff could be deployed through 'multi-skilling'. Our findings suggest that, as implemented, AST has maintained, if not reinforced, the old rigidities. Worse, by using quotas and tying promotion to positions, it has promoted disengagement among staff and reduced incentives for non AST teachers to make a wider contribution to school functioning. It thereby runs counter to the need to restructure schools as high-involvement organisations.

Schools can not function properly unless certain managerial tasks are done; preparing the timetable, checking attendance, organising teacher reliefs, attending to student welfare and many more. From a career development model perspective, it is important to ensure that this necessary managerial work gets done in a way that allows teachers to be assessed for a career move in teaching primarily on the basis of their professional knowledge and skill, rather than their willingness and capacity to undertake extra non-teaching tasks.

For this to be possible, it seems the AST reform will require not only a redefinition of teachers' work (and time), but also a reform of school management structures and responsibilities. Award restructuring in the industrial negotiation arena created a new career structure for teachers, but this structure was imposed on otherwise unchanged organisations, with unchanged assumptions about school management and how jobs got done.

Managers of effective organisations, according to some (eg. Lawler, 1992; Drucker, 1993), especially those employing professionals, are moving from job ladder to knowledge-based pay systems because the latter promote a culture that values learning, growth and change. They promote task flexibility and dissolve distinctions between management practice and organisational practice. In such knowledge-based organisations, all members have a responsibility to contribute to management functions as well as practice .

This implies that teachers' work needs to be redefined, and in broader terms, so that satisfactory contribution to school administration is a clear pre-requisite criterion for AST promotion, and for gaining and retaining a teaching position (as for academics). Since all teachers would be required to contribute to administration, greater weight could be given to pedagogical knowledge and skill when evaluating teachers for AST 1, 2 and 3 status. School staff would no longer be able to say, "I'm just a classroom teacher". Nor would teachers be allowed to do either too much managerial work or no managerial work. Consistent with this option, some staff commented:

> In order for the school to function well, more people need to take an active role in the running of the school, but they won't do it out of the goodness of their heart. So it could be part of a contract. Some independent schools do that. (ST21)

> The current system is unfair; it's not a level playing field. Some teachers are 9 - 3.30 people; they handball problems; they do the bare minimum; they take the view, "why bother to climb the mountain when you can get a ride up on the train?" We had three (non AST) teachers leave because they were doing all the extras and didn't get paid any more than the 9-3 o'clock teachers. Teachers must realise there are extra things to be done. (ST3)

Teaching Versus Non Teaching Criteria

The justification for a professional career path rests on the argument that there is such a thing as pedagogical expertise (Shulman, 1987; Berliner, 1992) and that it is possible to define developmental standards for teaching (Bacharach, Conley & Shedd, 1990). For the career development concept to be applicable to teaching, it must be possible to identify dimensions and stages of professional performance and development. In other words, it must be possible to clarify what teachers should get better at. Ideally, these standards would be set by members of the profession in order to draw upon the necessary expertise in teaching and to create a necessary sense of ownership and responsibility for them. Standards tied to career milestones can give purpose and direction to professional development and a sense of achievement when reached.

The credibility of AST 1 was placed in jeopardy because applicants were not assessed against high and rigorous standards of teaching, because the necessary research and development on standards and performance evaluation had not been conducted. Instead, applicants for AST1 were asked to provide school-based selection panels with self-report evidence of general teaching skills and to satisfy ideological criteria.

Generic Criteria

The selection criteria for AST 1 did not require applicants to demonstrate subject-specific or grade-specific pedagogical knowledge. For instance, the same generic criteria would be applied to a Grade One prep teacher using a whole language approach to teach reading and a Grade Twelve science teacher using a social context strategy to teach biology (Ingvarson and Chadbourne, 1994, p. 277). Examples of these generic criteria include:

- skills in effective classroom teaching practice and reporting and evaluating student progress;

- uses a wide range of teaching strategies;

- positive relationships with students and their classes and effective communication skills when collaborating with parents and other teachers;

- ability to develop ideas gained from professional development activities to enhance students' learning;

- capacity to assist other teachers in their professional development and the ability to supervise, instruct and counsel student teachers.

Generalist and untrained school-based selection panels were left to interpret these criteria with little further guidance or standard setting

Ideological Criteria

To the dismay of many teachers, government school systems used the following type of criteria to help select AST 1's:

- knowledge of the current Government policy in education;

- knowledge of the Action Plan for Women in the Teaching Service and a commitment to its implementation;

- knowledge of and commitment to the development and implementation of equal opportunity/social justice strategies.

These criteria created widespread resentment among teachers. While these issues were seen as important, teachers did not believe the promotion system should be used as a vehicle for gaining their implementation. Profession-determined standards were seen as a better, less politically charged, way of dealing with such issues. The dangers of making compliance to

government policy a basis for professional standards were obvious.

Some non government schools adopted criteria such as "support for the ethos/mission of the school", which were seen by some teachers as meaning "going to mass on Sunday." Interestingly, while government school teacher union officers tended to support the use of ideological criteria (they had played a part in developing the policies), non government teacher union officers did not.

The AST and career development models do not sit comfortably with the use of ideological criteria in promotion decisions. They are based on the idea of rewarding teachers for advances in their knowledge and skill, not compliance with government or religious policies. This is not to deny that teachers have a duty of loyalty to policy determined by democratically elected governments or school determined contractual duties. It is to question whether government policy can be a satisfactory basis for determining what teachers should know and be able to do at various career stages.

Unchanged and Additional Criteria

In a number of ways the types of criteria used for selecting AST 2 and 3 teachers are similar to those for AST 1. They are not based on research or wide consultation across the profession. They are generic rather than subject-specific. They were set by the employers and unions in an industrial context. And they contain ideological as well as pedagogical elements; for example, contribution to developing and implementing the school's Action Plan for Women.

In other ways, they differ. First, there are more criteria to meet; 'advanced' skill here means a wider repertoire of skills. Second, AST 2s and 3s are expected to be able to demonstrate these extra skills in a leadership capacity; 'advanced' skill here means leading other staff. Third, in addition to statewide (generic, ideological, leadership) criteria, AST 2 and 3 include school-based selection criteria which are 'position-specific'; advanced skill here refers to the ability to perform a particular job, such as equal opportunity coordinator, year level coordinator, or student welfare coordinator. The following comments convey school staff perspectives on the criteria used by AST 2 and 3 selection panels. Most of them are critical rather than complimentary.

> Most schools seemed more concerned with your capacity to display educational leadership. They just assumed that you were a good teacher, so they focussed on leadership. (ST2)
>
> The AST rewarded curriculum development and curriculum committee experience, not classroom teaching. (ST18)
>
> Typically teachers are being judged by their outside-of-classroom work. Many teachers have been placed 'in excess' because of not doing outside classroom work even though they were good classroom teachers. Good teachers are now seen to be doing outside classroom work. (ST2)
>
> The VSTA (Victorian Secondary Teachers Association) wanted positions set aside for a student welfare coordinator, curriculum coordinator, careers/guidance coordinator, daily organiser - all non teaching positions. The VSTA was opposed to heads of subject departments. They wanted ways to increase the positions of responsibility for its members and were not so worried about teaching and learning. (ST21)
>
> The emphasis was not put on individual classroom skills because it was hard to get evidence on that. The emphasis was put on looking for the ability to do a job in the future. (ST5)

Teaching Standards Versus Job Criteria

These comments are typical of many indicating that more attention and weight was placed on job criteria than standards related to quality of teaching. The AST criteria identify the domains of teachers' work that selection panels were expected to examine, but they do not indicate what constitutes accomplished practice. Therefore they do not provide a basis for

making judgements about the quality or standard of an applicant's work. Given that no official AST standards were set, it is difficult to know what yardsticks the AST 2 and 3 panels did use to make final selections and rankings. The following account, however, provides an insight into the standards used by one principal to distinguish between applicants in the domain of leadership. We do not know how representative this principal's standards are of other panel members throughout the state.

> The AST 3s that really stood out were ones who had been sharp shooting, innovators, obviously competent, very articulate; they had the big picture and knew where they were and where the rest of the scene was in terms of the big picture. It didn't mean they were airy fairy. They saw the purpose of things and they understood the big picture and could work within the system arrangements.
>
> It was quite dramatic for me, the difference between the AST 2 and 3. The big picture was not there to the same extent. So you could really tell by just talking with the people and seeing what they had done on their curriculum vitae - you know, being involved in leading curriculum development, in leading evaluation review stuff - that their whole career history was just one of being right there at the forefront and getting on with it.
>
> And the AST 1s we interviewed, again the big picture was not always articulated. In fact a lot of people just struggled with that big picture and were so narrowly focussed on what they do within their own subject area that they weren't aware of even the broad area, so I think it's that awareness of the bigger curriculum and educational pictures that distinguished applicants a lot of the time.
>
> The AST 3 was supposed to be the master teaching skills. Now all the things I'm describing, they are linked to the classroom, but they don't tell me about how good that person is in the classroom in establishing rapport, motivating the kids, really giving them a love of learning, giving kids confidence to continue in that subject and picking them up from being strugglers to being really great in the area. So the master skill in that sense was not picked up. It was hard to be discriminating about the extent to which you could pick out an outstanding practitioner in the classroom on a constant basis. (SP9)

Comment

The comments of school staff reported above reveal a divergence in perceptions about the role of AST 2 and 3. For some, AST 2 and 3 are defined primarily in terms of extra duties; for others, AST 3 are people with leadership qualities who can see the big picture. Different groups saw different purposes for AST 2 and 3. As things stand, it appears AST status has no clear or agreed meaning as yet. It certainly does not guarantee that a teacher has reached a profession-defined advanced standard of teaching. This brings us to the issue of teacher evaluation.

Valid Versus Inadequate Evaluation For AST

Having set high and rigorous standards for each milestone in a career path, valid and reliable evaluation processes are necessary to determine whether candidates for promotion have reached the required standards. Without a proper system of teacher evaluation, attempts to establish a credible career path in teaching will fail to gain the confidence and support of the profession and public.

If a valid system for establishing standards and evaluating teachers is an essential condition for a professional career path in teaching, how valid was the AST process?

Validity depends on purpose. The main purpose of the AST was to open up career paths based primarily on expertise in teaching, not to select people for specific jobs. It was intended that these career paths would lift the quality of education even higher by encouraging and rewarding professional development. Under this conception of consequential validity (Cronbach, 1988), the validity of the AST selection process would depend on how well it stimulated professional development toward higher standards of teaching. A valid evaluation process would have the consequence of encourage teachers to

work toward standards over several years, gathering multiple forms of evidence that demonstrated their expertise. To what extent did this happen?

AST 1: Lack of Credibility

The evaluation procedures for AST 1 lacked credibility: the selection panels were school-based, generalist and fixed, rather than constituting a 'college of specialists' that varied in composition according to the subject expertise of the applicants. So, for example, a science teacher's application could have been evaluated by a panel with no science expertise or science-specific content knowledge. Also, over 75% of applicants in the Victorian government school system were not even interviewed; the panels relied exclusively on reports provided by the applicants and referees. (These issues are dealt with in more detail in Chadbourne & Ingvarson (1991).

AST 2 and 3: Some Credibility

To some extent, the appointment of AST 2s and 3s addressed the shortcomings of AST 1.

Selection Panels: Schools were required to form a separate selection panel for each AST 2 and 3 position advertised. However, the membership of the panels could be the same for each position. In fact, of the four people on each panel, three were probably on most: namely, the principal and the nominees of the Union and State Department of School Education. The person most likely to vary from panel to panel was "a teacher from the school nominated by teachers from the said school" (DSE Selection Training Manual, 1992, p.4).

Interviews: All shortlisted AST 2 and 3 applicants had to be interviewed, so the panels had access to data additional to the written claims of applicants and referees' reports. On average the interviews lasted 30 minutes and were conducted in a way that most candidates rated as satisfactory.

External Assessment: Even though the AST 2 and 3 selection panels were school-based, the open statewide competition meant that many interviewees came from outside the school. In these cases, decisions were made free from the drawbacks of the school-based selection panel process that operated with AST 1.

Reliability - Interpretation of Criteria: The reliability of the AST 2/3 selection process is difficult to assess. But many teachers applied to for AST positions across a large number of schools (many up to 20-30 schools) and were bemused to find how much variation there was in the way schools rated them. These teachers questioned the reliability of the AST 2 and 3 selection process because they were shortlisted in some schools but not others. In reality, these inconsistencies may be more a function of applications being screened within a competitive norm-referenced framework than a result of the criteria being interpreted differently by different school-based panels; that is, applicants could have been up against stiffer competition for positions in one school they applied for than in another school. Other staff reported higher levels of consistency in the shortlisting process.

Validity - Sources of Data: Because the AST 2 and 3 selection panels had to interview shortlisted applicants, they drew on more evidence than did the AST 1 panels. Nevertheless, the whole AST 2 and 3 process fell far short of acceptable standards for teacher evaluation (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1988), using multiple sources of data, for example, through the use of portfolios (eg. Wolf, 1994) and simulation exercises (eg. Haertel, 1991), and potential sources of bias (Scriven, 1987).

Overall Impression

Despite addressing some of AST 1's shortcomings the validity of the AST 2 and 3 evaluation process must be rated as low. Brief interviews, resumes and referees' reports can not provide an adequate basis for making valid judgements about something as complex as teaching (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1988); the school-based

panel members had little training in performance or personnel assessment: and peer assessments are notoriously unreliable (Scriven, 1994).

As with AST 1, the AST 2 and 3 process was not guided by standards of quality teaching in various subjects or curriculum areas. There were no clearly defined standards which indicated what the profession thought teachers should get better at. As a consequence, the AST 2 and 3 process could not serve the professional development purpose well.

Why was such a process chosen - one so unsuited to evaluating professional performance? No reference was made to years of research on teaching, teacher evaluation, and the complexities of standard setting. As with the introduction of AST 1, surprisingly little time and research was given to the establishment of AST 2 and 3 criteria and the development of standards and valid evaluation. No trials of the new procedures were conducted. No research or evaluation was carried out. The assumption that valid standards could be developed in limited time and within the constraints of the industrial relations context proved to be without foundation.

The original AST concept was distorted from an idea that referred primarily to teaching, to one that focused on administration. Teacher evaluation was reinterpreted in terms of the familiar and traditional process of selecting someone for a future job - hence the reliance on interviews, resumés and referees. It was defined as a process of selecting someone for a position in an organisational hierarchy, reinforcing a control-oriented approach to school management. It was not perceived as a process of evaluating the quality of current practice in terms of standards defined by members of a professional body (Ingvarson, 1994). This idea did not have strong support from governments, employers or unions.

Professions tend to threaten traditional managerial control systems (Benveniste, 1987; Drucker, 1993). Yet it is difficult to see how schools can move toward the kind of high-involvement, high quality, professionally accountable organisations they will need to be in the future without career structures which provide incentives for the very teachers who are vital to the creation of such organisational culture to remain active practitioners.

CONCLUSIONS

Although it is early days yet, our study indicates that the AST classification, as it currently operates, is unlikely to:

- provide a more attractive career path for the best teachers,
- raise the quality and status of teachers' work, or
- promote professional development and improve the quality of learning in schools

As implemented, AST 2 and 3 represents only a slight modification to the previous system of SRPs and much the same job ladder model as existed before. The original intention of using AST as a vehicle to deliver an expertise-based alternative to the traditional pay system governing teachers' work has not been realised. AST 2 and 3 is mainly more pay for more work, with a vengeance.

As implemented, AST 2 and 3 have not led to the establishment of high and rigorous standards in teaching, incentives for skill based professional development or credible methods of teacher evaluation. As a result, it is doubtful that it has had, or can have, the positive effects intended on the quality of student learning.

As implemented, AST 2 and 3 have raised the profile and level of coordination and leadership in schools, particularly in relation to priority areas within school development plans and DSE's reform agenda. But at a price. One of the costs is the growing perception that managerial functions in a school are the responsibility of the few who have gained promotion.

The pervasive view of ASTs interviewed was that AST 2 and 3 had turned into a 'con trick': they had received a small increase in status and salary in return for a major increase in the managerial and administrative functions expected of them. As one AST said, "I don't have any time to get better at teaching now". A career structure that has such counter-productive effects must be questioned.

Closing Considerations

Why have we strayed so far from the original AST concept? The economic and political context obviously contributed. But many did not grasp the deeper significance of AST as a shift from a career ladder to a career development model. Their vision remained limited to traditional conceptions of more pay only for more work, and hierarchical models of school management. Others understood its significance only too well, and determined to ensure that the dangerous idea of paying teachers according to the value of their work did not gain a firm foothold.

A successful teacher evaluation system defines those behaviours that are critical to the success of the organisation, behaviours that it wants to encourage in *all* its staff. The critical question to ask of a career structure is whether it reinforces behaviours that help the organisation to better achieve its objectives. Does it enhance the quality of teaching? Does it increase contributions to collegiality and staff development, contributions to school administration and management, and contributions to the wider school and professional community? The use of quotas severely undermines the capacity of a career structure to encourage these activities amongst all staff, as does the inadequacy of the financial rewards.

At a generous estimate, AST 2s and 3s are working for between $5-10 an hour for the extra time they have to put in, a rate that is hardly commensurate with the value of their expertise. At the same time, the gap between principal's and teacher's salaries has widened considerably. We wonder why many teachers would take on AST positions as currently defined. Overwork and stress were manifest in most of the teachers we talked to. AST has become, despite the original AST concept, a necessary stepping stone to principal positions., But as these are few, we wonder if more able, experienced teachers will turn to other career options as a result of the lack of an attractive career path in teaching. In our view, the answer lies not in abandoning the AST concept, but in returning to the original career development intention behind it, and working through its implications.

Two quick final observations. Firstly, centralised Award Restructuring in Australia is currently under challenge from advocates of a decentralised form of enterprise bargaining or school-site agreements. This poses a real threat to the AST concept. The career development model embodies the view that the setting of professional standards should not be devolved to individual schools. Medical and legal specialists can practice their profession throughout Australia because their advanced professional qualifications hold currency from state to state. ASTs require a similar level of portability if a genuine career path in teaching is to be established. This raises the question of whether the AST classification is a position or job, or a professional certification or qualification. One answer is to make AST-type certification by a professional body a pre-requisite for specified school positions

Secondly, unlike curriculum and organisational reform, Award Restructuring attempts to improve the quality of teaching through the industrial relations arena. Only representatives of the unions, employers and government sit at the bargaining table. In setting criteria for AST, members of professional associations were excluded. Participation in the process was too restricted. Teachers had no real opportunity to exercise their right and responsibility for setting professional standards and evaluation procedures. Other professions do not use quasi-legal proceedings to determine what counts as quality practice. They engage in professional research, development, discussion and evaluation in a climate and culture of collegiality and shared values. A similar approach is required if attempts to rehabilitate and implement the AST concept are to succeed.

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3.2 Selection Criteria and Mandatory Skills

Skills have been identified in relation to each level of AST to be used by panels in assessing applicants. Applicants must demonstrate all skills specified at the level of AST to which they are applying in addition to all skills at the level/s below the level applied for.

Criterion A.

Demonstrated skills in excellent classroom teaching practice which foster improved learning outcomes for all students.

Mandatory Skills for AST 1:

To meet this criterion applicants for the AST 1 level shall demonstrate the following skills and practices:

- consistent use of a range of effective teaching strategies appropriate to year levels and subjects taught;
- consistent use of a range of assessment methods, evaluation strategies and reporting practices;
- use of effective classroom management strategies which contribute to the establishment of an effective learning environment;
- identifying differences in the way students learn and providing assistance to students that takes account of these differences.

Mandatory Skills for AST 2:

In addition to the skills outlined for Level 1, applicants for the AST 2 level shall be able to demonstrate the following in a leadership capacity:

- skills in using a broad range of innovative teaching and learning strategies;
- successful practice in organising teaching activities so that the learning needs of all students are catered for thereby enabling all students to experience success;
- consistent use of a range of effective management strategies which foster self discipline in the classroom and which help students take increasing control of their own learning;
- evaluating assessment and reporting practices in order to improve the way student learning is monitored and reported.

Mandatory Skills for AST 3:

In addition to the skills outlined for levels 1 and 2, applicants for the AST 3 level shall be able to demonstrate highly developed leadership skills in the following areas:

- ensuring that effective teaching and learning practices and strategies are addressed at a whole school level;
- using the principles of reflective teacher learning to encourage on-going improvement in teaching practices and strategies.

Criterion B.

Ability to develop positive relationships with students which engender positive attitudes to learning, and effective communication skills when collaborating with parents and other teachers.

Mandatory Skills for AST 1:

To meet this criterion applicants for the AST 1 level shall be able to demonstrate the following skills and practices:

- recognising students' problems and difficulties and developing strategies to address these needs;
- using a range of strategies to build confidence and self-esteem in students;
- collaborating effectively with other teachers;
- consulting with and advising parents as appropriate on individual students and groups of students;
- fostering classroom dynamics which enables the active participation of all students.

Mandatory Skills for AST 2:

In addition to the skills outlined for Level 1, applicants for the AST 2 level shall be able to demonstrate the following in a leadership capacity:

- facilitating the development of policy and programs which lead to improvement in students' attitudes to learning;
- collaborating with teachers, students and parents to improve the learning environment of the school.

Mandatory Skills for AST 3:

In addition to the skills outlined for levels 1 and 2, applicants for the AST 3 level shall be able to demonstrate highly developed leadership skills in the following areas:

- initiating policy and programs which lead to improvement in students' attitudes to learning thereby encouraging students to continue their education;
- working in partnership with teachers, students and parents to build a shared commitment to the promotion of excellence in learning.

Criterion C.

Ability to successfully implement and evaluate curriculum initiatives in line with key educational policy and ideas.

Mandatory Skills for AST 1:

To meet this criterion applicants for the AST 1 level shall demonstrate the following skills and practices:

- incorporating educational policy and ideas within classroom programs and practice;
- critically evaluating new approaches and ideas and developing these for classroom use;

- developing curriculum in collaboration with parents, teachers and the community.

Mandatory Skills for AST 2:

In addition to the skills outlined for Level 1, applicants for the AST 2 level shall be able to demonstrate the following in a leadership capacity across the school:

- developing curriculum in one or more classroom related areas within the framework of Department guidelines;
- developing school policy consistent with key educational policies;
- contributing to and promoting school improvement by identifying issues and proposing strategies for change.

Mandatory Skills for AST 3:

In addition to the skills outlined for levels 1 and 2, applicants for the AST 3 level shall be able to demonstrate highly developed leadership skills in the following areas:

- coordinating the development, implementation and evaluation of a whole school plan and/or a range of curriculum initiatives;
- implementing curriculum initiatives within the context of provision of a comprehensive curriculum.

Criterion D

Ability to contribute with other members of the school community to the identification of local classroom and professional development needs, and to the development and implementation of programs to respond to these needs.

Mandatory Skills for AST 1:

To meet this criterion applicants for the AST 1 level shall demonstrate the following skills and practices:

- providing professional assistance to other teachers, including student teachers, in classroom related areas;
- contributing to the development, implementation and evaluation of a professional development plan;
- enhancing students' learning through the application of ideas gained from professional development activities.

Mandatory Skills for AST 2:

In addition to the skills outlined for Level 1, applicants for the AST 2 level shall be able to demonstrate the following in a leadership capacity:

- developing effective team approaches to trialling and evaluating new ideas and teaching strategies that produce improvement in teaching and learning;
- facilitating the development and implementation of the school's professional development program;
- implementing identified school priorities by using agreed processes based on principles of effective professional development and change management.

Mandatory Skills for AST 3:

In addition to the skills outlined for levels 1 and 2, applicants for the AST 3 level shall be able to demonstrate highly developed leadership skills in the following areas:

- coordinating and evaluating the development and implementation of a key element of the school's professional development plan;
- coordinating the development and implementation of professional development strategies linked to a process of curriculum change.

Criterion E.

Ability to implement social justice strategies including equal opportunity and equal employment opportunity within schools.

Mandatory Skills for AST 1:

To meet this criterion applicants for the AST 1 level shall demonstrate the following skills and practices:

- implementing curriculum programs which actively redress educational disadvantage;
- using inclusive teaching strategies which are designed to achieve the participation of and effective learning outcomes for all students;
- contributing to the implementation of equal employment opportunity strategies including the Action Plan for Women in the Teaching Service.

Mandatory Skills for AST 2:

In addition to the skills outlined for Level 1, applicants for the AST 2 level shall be able to demonstrate the following in a leadership capacity:

- identifying social and educational disadvantage within the school;
- developing and implementing policy and programs that enable all groups of students to experience success, thereby encouraging students to continue their education;
- contributing to the development and implementation of the school's Action Plan for Women consistent with the Statewide Action Plan for Women in the Teaching Service.

Mandatory Skills for AST 3:

In addition to the skills outlined for levels 1 and 2, applicants for the AST 3 level shall be able to demonstrate highly developed leadership skills in the following areas:

- coordinating and evaluating policy and programs that enable all groups of students to experience success;
- initiating programs which give effect to social justice strategies to support access to a comprehensive curriculum.

3.3 School-based Selection Criteria

For the AST 2 and 3 levels Criterion F will be applied.

Criterion F

Ability to meet the identified school-based selection criterion.

In addition to the statewide criteria listed above, schools may select one of the following school-based selection criteria:

i. Curriculum: General

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's curriculum program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of whole school curriculum organisation, planning and development;
- the ability to coordinate a school's overall curriculum program.

ii. Curriculum: VCE

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's VCE program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of VCE curriculum organisation, planning and development;
- knowledge and understanding of VCE policies and requirements.

iii. Curriculum: Frameworks P-6

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's curriculum program, P-6, within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of curriculum organisation, planning and development;
- knowledge and understanding of Curriculum Frameworks.

iv. Curriculum: Frameworks 7-10

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's curriculum program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of curriculum organisation, planning and development;

- knowledge and understanding of Curriculum Frameworks.

v. *Curriculum: Frameworks P-10*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's curriculum program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of curriculum organisation, planning and development;
- knowledge and understanding of Curriculum Frameworks.

vi. *Curriculum: Literacy*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's literacy program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of curriculum organisation, planning and development;
- knowledge and understanding of the Department's Literacy strategy.

vii. *Curriculum: Numeracy*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of the school's numeracy program within statewide policies and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of curriculum organisation, planning and development;
- knowledge and understanding of the Department's numeracy strategy.

viii. *Equal Opportunity: General*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's equal opportunity strategies within Ministry policies and guidelines on social justice.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school/college policies, programs and activities to meet the particular needs of disadvantaged groups, including women and girls;
- the ability to initiate, develop and support programs to redress discrimination.

ix. *Equal Opportunity. Koori*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's Koori education strategies.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school/college policies, programs and activities to meet the particular needs of Kooris;
- the ability to initiate, develop and support programs to redress discrimination.

x. *Equal Opportunity: Multicultural*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's multicultural education strategies.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school/college policies, programs and activities to meet the particular needs of a school's multicultural groups;
- the ability to initiate, develop and support programs to redress discrimination.

xi. *Equal Opportunity: Girls*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's equal opportunity strategies.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of school/college policies, programs and activities to meet the particular needs of girls;
- the ability to initiate, develop and support programs to redress discrimination.

xii. *Staff Development:*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a staff training/professional development plan which takes into account the needs of individuals as well as those of the school.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to support and encourage the process of professional development planning which takes into account the needs of individuals as well as the school;
- the ability to communicate effectively with staff and region and consistently provide relevant information concerning professional development and career opportunities.

xiii. *Learning Area Coordination:*

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of one of the following learning areas (English Language, Maths, Personal Development, Social Education, The Arts, Commerce, Science, Technology Studies or LOTE) across all levels of the school.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider::

- the ability to facilitate cooperative curriculum development in the learning area;
- knowledge and understanding of the particular learning area.

xiv. Level Coordination:

Ability to provide educational leadership in the coordination of a school's program in one or more levels.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to facilitate the cooperative development of curriculum approaches to classroom management;
- the ability to effectively monitor student progress and implement appropriate strategies to maximise students' learning opportunities.

xv. Sub-school Coordination:

Ability to provide educational leadership in the coordination of a school's program in a sub-school.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to facilitate the cooperative development of curriculum approaches to classroom management;
- the ability to effectively monitor student progress and implement appropriate strategies to maximise students' learning opportunities.

xvi. Student Welfare:

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's student welfare program.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to develop inclusive curriculum in conjunction with the development, implementation and review of a school's student welfare policy;
- the ability to provide information and professional support to relevant staff on welfare issues.

xvii. Work Education:

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's work education program.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to facilitate the cooperative development of a work education program within the broad school curriculum;
- the ability to develop school community links and provide information, career counselling and advice to students.

xviii. Curriculum Resources:

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of a school's curriculum resources.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- the ability to promote cooperation between teachers in developing units of study, teaching strategies and research activities designed to meet student learning needs;
- the ability to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of a school's curriculum resource collection to meet its educational objectives.

xix. Integration:

Ability to provide educational leadership in the development, implementation and evaluation of an inclusive curriculum program which supports integration at the school within Department policy and guidelines.

Guidelines: in assessing whether applicants satisfy this criterion the panel could consider:

- knowledge and understanding of strategies designed to enhance the access and success of students with disabilities;
- the ability to liaise with a range of people and groups such as parents, other teachers, consultants, school councils and members of integration support groups.

xx. Other:

Where a school has developed an alternative criterion for one or more of their AST 2 or 3 positions to those specified above the applicant must be assessed against the criterion/a and associated guidelines. Only those criteria and guidelines verified by the Appointments Unit and advertised with the position may be used. Selection panels may not add to these or alter them in any way.

**"Definition of "Curriculum"*

The term "curriculum" covers all the arrangements the school makes for students' learning and development. It includes the content of courses, student activities, teaching approaches, and the ways in which teachers and classes are organised. It also includes decisions on the need for and use of facilities."

Ministry of Education, 1988, The School Curriculum and Organisation Framework: P-12, p. 8.